

1912
DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

^K
King RICHARD III.

And his Adopted SON

RICHARD IV.

*Aude aliquid Brevibus Gyaris vel Carcere dignum
Si vis esse Aliquis.*



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BRITISH MUSEUM
LONDON

A

DIALOGUE, &c.

King *Richard* III.

MY noble Friend, you are welcome to these infernal Regions. I have heard much of your Fame, and this Instant I heard of your Arrival, and hastened to congratulate you upon it.

Richard IV. Sir, I have the Misfortune not to remember that I ever saw you in all my Life.

K. Sir, it was impossible you should, for I am King *Richard* the III. who came hither above two hundred and fifty Years ago, and should be glad to be informed of the History of your Life, for I am told it was full of rare Adventures.

Rich. Your Majesty is very obliging and condescending, and it is my Duty to obey your Commands, especially as I had the Ambition to have your Majesty's Character always in View.

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K. I

K. I thought I had set a glorious Example of Ambition, worthy of all Imitation ; but I cannot hear that any one of the People of my Dominions (save your noble self, for which I honour you) have taken me for their Pattern. I find the old Adage is not true. *Regis ad Exemplum totus componitur Orbis.*

Rich. I beg your Majesty not to speak *Latin*, for I don't know three Words of it.

K. How ! I imagined you had had the Education of a Gentleman.

Rich. You must know, Sir, I was born one in the *W-----t* of *E-----d*, my Father died when I was young, and I was left to the Care of a Proctor of the *Bishop's Court*.

K. A happy Beginning !

Rich. He put me to School, and would have had me well instructed, but I seldom or never went there ; my Time was better employed, in filching, robbing Orchards and Hen-Roofts, &c. in short, I was reckoned the greatest Thief and Lyar in the whole School. However, I was very grateful to the Proctor for his intended Care of me.

K. How ! grateful ?

Rich. Yes, very grateful, as his four Daughters can all testify, and your Majesty shall hear by-and-by.

K. Proceed, my noble Friend, for I am impatient to hear the Progress of this happy Beginning.

Rich.

Rich. Your Majesty must excuse me, if I make a great Chasm in my History here, for little remarkable happened ; save that I went over to *I-----d* to my elder Brother who was a great Man there. That I staid with him some Years, proceeded as I began, and never once deviated from the Path I first set out in, but finding myself shun'd and neglected by every body, I returned to (the Northern Part of) my native County, and from that Time, my Life was a Scene full of Action.

K. I lament the Chasm, but, pray, proceed.

Rich. I no sooner arrived there, but I fell much in Love with a great Sum of Money that was possess'd by a young Lady, whom I heartily despised, but as one could not be had without the other, and Money was very necessary for me, I condescended to marry her.

K. But cou'dn't you get the Money without committing Matrimony ?

Rich. You may swear I cou'dn't. I tryed indeed, but the squeamish Bitch would do nothing but in a lawful Way, as she call'd it.

K. Then I pardon you.

Rich. Yes, and I hope you will do the same for two or three more Marriages.

K. With all my Heart, but proceed.

Rich.

Rich. Soon after I married, I went to L-----n, where I set up a grand Equipage, took a House, furnish'd it most elegantly, gam'd, kept Whores, got drunk, quarrel'd with the Watch, and lived as a Gentleman should do.

K. All this was as it should be.

Rich. In short, in a very little Time I spent all my Wife's Fortune, and ran so in Debt, that I dar'd not shew my Head ; so one Morning, very early, I took my Wife in my Chariot and Six, and drove her down (for I sat on the Box till I was out of Danger) to the Place where I married her.

K. And pray, what became of your fine furnish'd House ?

Rich. I left a Friend and Relation in it, with Orders to keep the Doors constantly shut, for Fear the Landlord should seize for the Rent, or the Tradesmen for their Furniture ; for which I hope your Majesty will do me the Justice to think that I never paid, nor ever intended to pay.

K. I did not suspect you.

Rich. I soon after returned to I-----d, where I gave a Letter of Attorney to dispose of my Furniture in L-----n, to a most Intimate of mine, the Son of an Ale-Dra-per. He went to my House, broke open a Box, took out a fine Suit of laced Cloths, laced Cravats and Shirts, dress'd himself in them, insisted that it was a Reflection on a Gentle-

a Gentleman, to have his Doors constantly shut, as if he were afraid of Bailiffs, so left them wide open, when the Scoundrels rush'd in, and seiz'd all; whilst he went about the Town *trumpetting* my Fame.

K. That was a great Loss to you.

Rich. It was indeed, for by this Time I was become special poor.

K. But I hope you found a Way to live as became a Man of your Quality?

Rich. Not very well, but I endeavoured, and returning to my native Country, my first Boutade was to go and collect our Rents, as we call'd it.

K. What we?

Rich. Some jolly Companions of mine, of the same Kidney and Spirit with myself, so we went to a great boozing Ken, in a great Town lately burn'd down to the Ground.

K. Pray, What is a boozing Ken?

Rich. I ask your Majesty's Pardon for using a Word, which to be sure must be unknown to you, for it is a Cant-Word used by Gentlemen of the Pad, and other such Folks to signify a publick House. We have Cant-Words for almost every Thing, and really I have been so used to them amongst the Company I always kept, that I can hardly forbear popping them out sometimes, and betraying myself. I will repeat to your Majesty, if you please, the whole Cant, for I have

have it all at my Fingers Ends.

K. No, my noble Friend, I thank you, I had much rather hear of your Adventures. But first, I beg to know what you mean by Gentlemen of the Pad ?

Rich. Sir, that is Gentlemen in Distress, who collect, or rob on the Highway. But, Sir, as I was saying, we went to this boozing Ken (excuse me, Sir, you see I can't help it) I mean the publick House where we found the Landlord from Home. We took that happy Opportunity to debauch the Wife, the Daughter, the Servant-maids, and eat and drank most extravagantly, made the Wife drunk, and sign a Bill of Sale for all the Goods and Furniture in the House, which we conveyed away in the Night-time, and then marched off ourselves, and the Landlord when he returned, had the Pleasure to find an empty House, and all the Birds flown.

K. And this is what you call collecting Rents, it was a noble Exploit indeed ; but how came you off about it ?

Rich. I had some Trouble indeed, but made it up upon pretty easy Terms. We had several more little Exploits of the same Kind, not worth troubling your Majesty with.

K. Oh, Sir, I am never weary of hearing you.

Rich. But I am coming to a grand one,
and

and worth your Attention : Being tired of that Kind of low Life, we resolv'd to take the Road, and accordingly attack'd a Person on our Road to L-----n, whom we robb'd of no great Booty, but the Country was immediately alarm'd, and my two Companions taken, but I escap'd; then I return'd back to my own Country, where I had the Misfortune to be pursu'd and taken too, clap'd into Goal, and most heavily darby'd (I ask Pardon) I mean iron'd.

K. I am in Pain for you, how got you off?

Rich. Never fear me, I warrant you I always find a Hole to creep out at. Why, I turn'd Evidence against my Companions; one of them indeed, was my own Footman, so I hanged them both, and saved myself.

K. Most gloriously done.

Rich. After this, I chose to change the Scene of my Actions, so I went to I-----d, and never saw the Bitch my Wife more. There I fell in Love with a very pretty Girl, whom I-----

K. What !

Rich. And then I married her.

K. Was not your first Wife living?

Rich. Living ! Yes, what then ?

K. Nothing, but that I envy you that spirited Action, and wish to be on Earth again, that I might do the same Thing, and have it to say, I was out-done by no mortal Wight, in any one Circumstance whatsoever.

Rich. I was at this Time extremely poor, and so was my eldest Brother ; but I got some Money with my Wife, and I gave him Part, and prevailed on him to *abandon his Son* to the wide World : In this I had two Views, one was that, he being supposed to have no Son, we might join to raise Money upon the Reversion of an Estate that he was an Expectant of, and the other was, that on my Brother's Death I might succeed to his Dignity, so while the Boy was running almost naked about the Streets, I gave out that *he was my Bastard*, tho' it was impossible it should be so, for when he was begot I was in my own Country courting my first Wife.

K. Well but how did you succeed in your two Views ?

Rich. Perfectly well, for we raised a great deal of Money, divided it between us, and cheated every Body who was foolish enough to trust in us ; and as to my second View, my Brother dying soon after this, his Son being young, and as by my Reports of him it became doubtful with many People whether he was his Son or not, he became helpless, for no one would venture at the Expence of contesting the Point with me, who was then become a great Man. But to prevent any Danger that might arise from the Compassion of those who knew him to be

be my Nephew, and to secure my Greatness; I determin'd to *put him out of the Way*: I was long in Debate with my self whether I should murder him my self, or get him murder'd.

K. This is the only weak Part of your History hitherto: How can you say you had my Character always in view? I am almost asham'd of you, you were foolishly faint-Hearted.

Rich. Indeed I have repented of it a thousand Times since, but I then weakly thought that, sending him beyond Seas would do full as well, and that I should never hear of him again, any more than if I had murder'd him, so I made an Attempt to secure him in which I fail'd by means of a damn'd Butcher: But as brave Spirits are not to be daunted, I made a second Attempt, in which I happily succeeded. I KIDNAPT him and *transported* him where I expected never to hear of him more.

K. And did you?

Rich. Yes, to my Sorrow, or I should not have been here so soon, but more of this hereafter. This Bar being removed, I took upon me the great Man, without Opposition, but still I was very poor and put to the utmost Stretch of my Wits how to get Bread, but I miss'd no Opportunity that offer'd, and a lucky one soon happen'd to me; 'tis a pleasant Story, and I believe will

please your Majesty. An old Fellow, a Neighbour of mine, who was proud that I called him Cousin (tho' he was no Relation) begg'd me one Day to write a Letter for him to ask a Favour of a neighbouring Justice, I told him I would join with him in a Letter with all my Heart, so I desir'd him to write his Name at the Bottom of a Sheet of Paper, and told him I would fill it up (at my Leisure) with his Request and add my Name to his, which the credulous old Fool readily did and departed, here was a glorious Opportunity.

K. How so, pray ?

Rich. Why I immediately drew a promissory Note of five hundred Pounds just above his Name, payable to me at a certain Time.

K. I profess it was a glorious Thought, I own it did not occur to me, but how did you get the Money ?

Rich. I did not get it all from him ; but I did better, for the old Man soon died, and his son being possess'd of his Father's Estate became Extravagant, and pass'd his Notes for forty or fifty Pounds, which I hearing of, bought up his Notes, arrested the young Fellow, threw him into a Goal where he lay Starving, to avoid which he comply'd with my Terms, which were to assign to me the whole Estate upon my giving him forty or fifty Pounds more, so
I got

I got the whole Estate, which I sold afterwards for above five hundred Pounds.

K. I own it is an agreeable Story, and gives me great Pleasure.

Rich. But as Money always burnt in my Pocket, that was soon gone.

K. you paid no Debts with it I hope?

Rich. Debts! I am surpris'd your Majesty should ask the Question; I thought by this Time you had known me better: Debts! no, prove that I ever paid one, if I could possibly avoid it, and I will give you leave to renounce me for ever.

K. I ask your Pardon, but go on if you please.

Rich. As I was saying my Money was soon gone, I was forced to play at small Game rather than be idle, so I found out a Way to make my Wife's bearing Children serviceable to me, for whenever I had a Christening I never let the Midwife go out of the House till I had borrow'd of her all the Money she had given her, and I am sure that first and last I got above a hundred Pounds that Way, besides a fine large piece of Plate that she lent me at one Christning to grace my Side-Board, and which my Mouth water'd at so much that I never let her have it again, but sold it for my own Emolument.

R. you see how Necessity sharpens the Invention.

Rich.

Rich. And thus I lived upon my Wits and Tricks, and upon Credit 'till a lucky Revolution of Fortune happen'd to me. Behold I had a rich Uncle who died, left a great Estate, and I as his Heir (my Nephew being happily *put out* of the Way) became a great Man indeed: By Stratagem I got Possession of his Estate, which however he had bequeathed to other Persons, but I kept possession and made Composition with those who I thought had a Right to the Whole, and now a new Scene opens.

K. I hope it does not differ in Gallantry and heroick Actions from your former ones.

Rich. Never fear me, I assure your Majesty I never was a Changeling. And now many People, but especially my Creditors, came in shoals to congratulate me on my new happy Situation, and the Fools believed now it was in my Power that I would certainly pay them, but the Blockheads did not know me, As I had two sorts of Creditors so I had *two Ways* of treating them, one Sort Tradesmen, whom I satisfied with a thousand Oaths, Imprecations and Promises, and they, credulous Fools, were weak enough to believe me in Earnest. The other Sort were People who lent me ready Money when I was in the greatest Distress and Starving, but those I did not satisfy, for I
swore

swore I never saw them in my Life before; wonder'd at their Impudence to ask me for Money! and order'd them to be turn'd or kick'd from my Doors: I assure your Majesty I served many of them in this Manner.

K. I readily believe you; you need take no Pains to convince me that you acted always consistently, and did as you ought to do.

Rich. I was not long a great Man, indeed, before I went over to *L-----n*, where I met with the eldest Daughter of my Proctor; she was married to a Tradesman, whom I visited constantly for the Sake of his Wife, who was exceeding kind. The Fellow thought I did him great Honour, and made grand Entertainments for me and my Companions, and he was encouraged to this Expence, by my promising him five hundred Pounds, which the contented Fool depended on, and indeed I fixed several Days for giving it him; but on a certain *Friday* (I remember it well) I swore a thousand Oaths to him, that he should have the Money next Day, upon which I retired with his Wife into the Bed-chamber, and took my Farewel of her.

K. Why, did you intend never to see her more?

Rich. No, never more, and early the next Morning I set out, and returned to *I-----d*,
and

and the Fellow broke three Days after I went, and transported himself to *America*, which I was very sorry I did not know, till it was too late, for the Fellow could then have done me a Piece of Service there, for which I would have given him five thousand Pounds.

K. I understand you. But I thought you told me you had been grateful to the Proctor's four Daughters.

Rich. And so I was, and to the Father too, as you shall hear; for while I was that Time in *L-----n*, I invited the Father and his Family to Town, promising him an Employment of five hundred Pounds a Year. He accepted the Invitation, and I took a little House not far from Town, that I might have them all to myself, and then it was that I was as grateful as I possibly could be to the other three Daughters. Those were happy Days indeed! and I enjoyed a Mahometan Paradise; but the watchful Rogue of a Father found me in Bed one Morning with two of his Daughters, on which he presented me with ten thousand Curfes, and return'd home immediately, with his Daughters much edified, and he much out of Pocket.

K. But did he never teize you for the Employment?

Rich. O, yes, frequently, and I as often assur'd him of it; but I had no more Interest at Court than an under Door-keeper's Friend's

Friend's Friend. But will your Majesty permit me to tell you *one Story more* of a trifling Affair that happened when I was that Time in *L-----n*?

K. With all my Heart.

Rich. A Woman who was become exceeding poor, and with whom I formerly lodged when she was in good Circumstances, took my promissory Note for eight Pounds for Lodging, which, I being then poor, could not pay. She, I say, came to my House one Day, and sent me up the Note, knowing I was able, and believing I was willing to pay it; but I knew a Trick worth two of that, for I threw the Note into the Fire, and ordered the Woman to be kick'd out of Doors. So I got rid of her Impertinence.

K. 'Tis a Pity the Note was not for a greater Sum.

Rich. 'Tis so indeed. I wish all my Debts had been included in it.

K. Hitherto you have had a glorious Scene of Success, and indeed, improved every Opportunity to the best Advantage; insomuch, that if you had been my Cotemporary, you should have been my first Minister of State; but as that cannot now be, permit me to adopt you my well-beloved Son.

Rich. Your Majesty does me great Honour, and I gratefully accept your kind Offer.

K. I hope, Son, your Happiness continu-
ed 'till the Hour of your Arrival here ?

Rich. Oh ! no, Sir, for I was no sooner
returned to I-----d, than I heard my Ne-
phew was returning from abroad, and from
that Moment, to the Hour of my Death,
I never had one Moment's Quiet or Ease :
It was then I curs'd myself a thousand Times
every Hour, for being so foolishly tender,
as not to have dispatch'd him at once ; for
dead Men tell no Tales.

K. Well, Son, but was it too late to do
it then ; or had you any of the foolish Ten-
derness remaining in you still ?

Rich. Not at all, for I immediately re-
turn'd to L-----n, with a full Intent to have
it executed, and framed to myself a thou-
sand Stratagems for that Purpose, but I found
them all impracticable without my being
discover'd, and executed myself, and so an-
other Thought came into my Head, which
was so weak an one that I am really asham-
ed to mention it to your Majesty.

K. Pray, let us hear it.

Rich. Tho' I fear your Majesty will
scarce forgive me yet I will obey your
Commands. I was foolish enough to re-
solve to give all up to my Nephew, re-
serving to my self only whereon to live like
a Gentleman.

K. I could not have imagined my Son capa-
ble of such a Resolution, you have heard
how

how I in the like Case chose to die bravely in *Bosworth-Field* Sword in Hand, rather than quit the least Tittle of my Usurpations. I fear you were a Coward.

Rich. I own, Sir, I had always a great Tendernefs for my Person, and had rather at any Time have taken twenty Kicks on the A---- or Twicks by the Nose than run the Risk of one Poke thro' the Guts.

K. But you say you had resolved to give up and so forth, however if you did not I can forgive you, for no Man is wise at all Times.

Rich. I profess to your Majesty I don't know what I might have done, for I consider'd half a Loaf is better than no Bread, but an Accident happen'd which revived all my drooping Hopes, for my *Nephew* chanced to commit an *Action* for which I made no Doubt, by my Management, to have had him hang'd.

K. I hope my dear Son you succeeded according to your Wishes.

Rich. Oh, no Sir! For tho' I bribed Witnesfes, and fee'd many tip-top Council and employ'd all my Art, Cunning, and Diligence, yet the damn'd Jury found him innocent,

K. This was a great Defeat to you, and I condole you on it.

Rich. It was indeed, and I endanger'd my Life by it, for I graced the Prosecu-

tion with my Prefence, and the rude Mob were so infens'd at me, that I verily believe if I had not convey'd my Person privately out at the back-Door, and procur'd a strong Guard of Constables, they would have torn me Limb from Limb.

K. I find the Populace continues the same that they were in my Time, for indeed they shew'd but little regard even to my sacred Person, but pray what Step did you take next?

Rich. I return'd to *I---d*, where growing weary of my second Wife, I pretend'd she was too great with a Gentleman of my Acquaintance, so turn'd her off, swore I was never marry'd to her, and *bastardized* all my Children by her.

K. But what became of your first Wife all this While?

Rich. She lived upon Charity (as they call it) 'till I became a great Man indeed, when (I forgot to tell you before) I gave her a handsome Sum of Money to quit all Claim to me; and just after I had put away my second Wife, she died, when I immediately administred to her, and sent over a Person to secure all her Effects. I hoped indeed to have got all my Money back again, but unluckily she had dispos'd of it before; so I got very little by that Job, save her old Clothes: But now comes a *most dreadful Scene* indeed, for my Nephew came over to me,

[2]
me, and undertook to try Titles with me (as they call it) at Law, and tho' I suborn'd a great Numper, and hid *one of his material Evidences, so that he will never appear more,* and employed all the most eminent Council I could possibly get, yet-----

K. Yet what ! You frighten me, I hope they had not the Hardiness to determine against you ?

Rich. Indeed, they had, and from that Moment all Mankind *shun'd me*, my Friends abandon'd me (tho' that was but a small Loss, for I never had many) I became the most *despised Creature* on Earth, but all this I should have little regarded, the worst was, I was *pennyless*, had not a Cross to bless myself with, nor Credit for a Pot of Ale ; the only Comfort I had left was in a *pretty Girl* that I had purchased from her Parents, whom I married a little before, but this very Comfort became in a short Time my greatest Pain, and not being able to bear the Distress I saw my dear Creature constantly in, I tyed on a *hempen Cravat*, and swung myself gently hither, leaving my Nephew in great Grandeur, highly in the Esteem and Love of all Mankind.

K. My dear Son, let me embrace you, you are thrice heartily welcome to me ; and I own, you have, within your Sphere of
Life,

Life, acted as well as I did in my higher One.

Rich. I have not given your Majesty half the History of my Life, but I am proud that this little Specimen recommends me to your Majesty's Approbation; will your Majesty permit me to enquire after a Person, for whom I had always the greatest Veneration. I mean your Brother *James II.*

K. Oh, Sir, he is here, and one for whom I have a particular Regard; but I am sorry I can't enjoy him more: For you must know, my Son, that we have here, short *Intervals* of Ease, and I am very glad you happen'd to come in one of mine, or I don't know when I should have had the Pleasure to hear your Story. But as to my Brother *James*, he has had but one Interval since his Arrival, and then he was mad, running up and down the Apartments, cursing and swearing, and devoutly excommunicating all his Successors, who he swears are all here; but I have narrowly examin'd and enquir'd all the Apartments over, and can't find one of them; and *Satan* told me, just before you arrived, that if they were not in the Apartment of Kings, they were not here at all.

Rich. Will your Majesty permit me to enquire what is become of your two Nephews that you so gloriously dispatch'd before you mounted their Throne?

K. Oh,

K. Oh, my Nephews ! why did you name them ?

Rich. Why does your Majesty start and tremble, and look so horribly aghast.

K. Oh, my Nephews !

Rich. The Sight of your Majesty infects me. Hah ! what's this I feel ! Oh Conscience, Conscience ! I feel thee now, but now thou comest too late. Oh terrible ! thou harrowest up my Soul, and will shake my Frame to Atoms. Oh dreadfully dreadful ! 'Tis not to be born ! Oh Remembrance ! Oh horrible, most horrible !

K. Oh ! there's no Redemption, but perhaps a Century hence, we may have three Days Interval.

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